UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

October 23, 2006

Ms. Stacey Blersch
Planning Division
P.O. Box 1715
Baltimore, Md. 21203

Subject: Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration Integrated
Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement CEQ # 20060366

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of
the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offers the following
comments regarding the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration project Draft
Environmental Impact Statement. The recommended plan would restore 2,144 acres of habitat,
protect 623 acres of existing island habitat that includes 352 acres of critical submerged aquatic
vegetation and provide 90 to 95 million cubic yards of dredged material placement capacity.
The recommended plan selects the James and Barren Islands for island ecosystem restoration.

EPA region 3 has participated in the Baltimore Harbor and Cannels, Dredged Material
Management Plan and Tiered Environmental Impact Statement developed to address the
dredging needs of the area over a 20 year planning horizon. EPA also recommends, in addition
to the restoration of the Mid Bay Island, that the development of a long term management effort
to protect and improve wetlands in the Black Water Wildlife (BWR) Refuge in Dorchester
County be considered for future restoration. The BWR needs millions of cubic yards of
materials and while this alternative will require some major engineering and design, this site is of
national aquatic significance and has the potential for large scale wetlands creation.

Based upon our review of the Draft EIS the project is rated as LO, Lack of Objections
(LO). A copy of the EPA rating criteria is enclosed for your reference. If you have any
questions or comments please feel free to contact me at 215-814-3367 or Mr. Bill Muir at 215-
814-2741.

Sincerely,

William Arguto, NEPA Team Leader
Environmental Programs Branch

Enclosures: